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Arrogance in the Name of Christ: An Ethical Criticism of Ralph Reed's Persuasive Narratives

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Honors Thesis
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"The changes wrought by sentences are changes in the world rather than in the physical earth, but it is to be remembered that changes in the world bring about changes in the earth" (119). In this statement, Richard Weaver cogently expresses the power of words and, by extension, the power of rhetoric. If one accepts the basic communication concept that meaning (reality) is created between people, then rhetoric must be considered one of the most effective tools in the shaping and construction of that reality. The "world" in which we live is therefore largely dependent on rhetors. Because of this, the ethics of a rhetor and his or her message become vitally important. In this analysis, I will examine the rhetoric of one of the most influential voices in contemporary American politics, Ralph Reed, Executive Director of the Christian Coalition. Specifically, I will draw ethical conclusions from his use of narratives, a particularly powerful persuasive device.

I will base the ethical portion of this analysis on the theories and concepts in Richard Weaver's book, The Ethics of Rhetoric. He begins simply by explaining the possible effects that a speaker's message can have on an audience:

Sophistications of theory cannot obscure the truth that there are but three ways for language to affect us. It can move us toward what is good; it can move us toward what is evil; or it

can, in hypothetical third place, fail to move us at all (6). Therefore, the most basic question that an ethical evaluator of rhetoric must ask is this: in which direction would this particular artifact tend to move an audience? Or, put another way, in which direction does this piece of rhetoric invite an audience to move? Obviously, rhetoric that moves an audience toward good is ethical and rhetoric that moves an audience toward evil is unethical. An ethical evaluation entails much more than judging the "truth" of what is said or the soundness of the arguments that are made. It is possible to construct a rhetorical artifact that contains nothing but truthful statements and logically strong arguments that would still move an audience toward what is evil.

Weaver goes on to examine more fully the three paths. He explains that the third option, to not move an audience at all, is a false one when one deals with rhetoric. While Weaver admits that there are statements that seem to be neutral (such as $2+2=4$) and do not appear to invite an audience to move in any kind of direction, rhetoric is a form of communication in which audience movement is inherent (7). Rhetoric's purpose is to persuade; it would not exist if it did not move an audience in some kind of direction. Weaver explains this in the following statement:

But there is no reason to despair over the fact that men will never give up seeking to influence one another. We would not desire it to be otherwise; neuter discourse is a false idol, to worship which is to commit the very offense for which Socrates [in the dialogue, Phaedrus] made expiation in his second speech (24).

So, the choices are now narrowed down to two. Either a rhetor moves an audience toward what is good or toward what is evil. There are, of course, varying degrees of this movement; not all persuasive speeches have the degree of ethical intensity found in the speeches of Hitler, for example. However, all persuasive messages push an audience to do or to think something, and all thoughts or actions have ethical content.

Weaver continues by describing the two remaining directions. He explains that ". . . rhetoric at its truest seeks to perfect men by showing them better versions of themselves, links in that chain extending up toward the ideal, which only the intellect can apprehend and only the soul have affection for" (25). Weaver also describes the ethical persuader as ". . . a noble lover of the good, who works through dialectic and through poetic or analogical association" (18). Thus, an ethical rhetor not only loves the truth, but also loves his or her audience and wants the best for them. He or she seeks to elevate the audience through persuasion. Weaver suggests that this is accomplished by shifting from a logical to an analogical argumentative approach:

. . . let us suppose that a speaker has convinced his listeners that his position is "true" as far as dialectical inquiry may be pushed. Now he sets about moving the listeners toward that position, but there is no way to move them except through the operation of analogy. The analogy proceeds by showing that the position being urged resembles or partakes of something greater and finer. It will be represented, in sum, as one of the steps leading toward ultimate good (18).

This advocacy of an analogical or poetic style of ethical argument further illustrates the idea that there is more to rhetorical ethics than simply the truthfulness of the evidence presented. A rhetor can lay out a sound argument, but he or she must go beyond logic and beyond facts in order to persuade his or her audience that the argument is for the "ultimate good."

Next, Weaver looks at rhetoric that moves the audience toward evil. He states that this kind of persuasion exploits the audience for the rhetor's gain. He labels this as "base rhetoric" because it appeals to the base emotions of humans:

We find that base rhetoric hates that which is opposed, or is equal or better because all such things are impediments to its will, and in the last analysis it knows only its will. Truth is the stubborn, objective restraint which this will endeavors to overcome. Base rhetoric is therefore always trying to keep its objects from the support which personal courage, noble associations, and divine philosophy provide a man (11).

Base rhetoric only serves itself and must destroy everything that opposes it. A defining characteristic of base rhetoric is marked disrespect for advocates of alternate positions. Further, instead of loving his or her audience, a base rhetor shows contempt for them: ". . . the things which would elevate he keeps out of sight, and the things with which he surrounds his 'beloved' are those which minister to desire" (11). He or she also attempts to keep the audience at an intellectual disadvantage: ". . . he seeks to keep the understanding in a passive state by never permitting an honest examination of alternatives" (12). The base rhetor continues to destroy opposition and limit audience understanding by dressing up

one alternative "in all the cheap finery of immediate hopes and fears, knowing that if he can thus prevent an exercise of imagination and will, he can have his way" (12). Unethical persuasion is ultimately anti-reason because it discourages debate and distorts all opposing viewpoints:

By discussing only one side of an issue, by mentioning cause without consequence or consequence without cause, acts without agents or agents without agency, he often successfully blocks definition and cause-and-effect reasoning (12).

In short, rhetoric that appeals heavily to frail human desires and fears, that deceives through distortion or omission, that shows contempt for the audience, and that encourages hatred of the opposition moves an audience toward evil and must be considered unethical.

I will reach ethical conclusions about the rhetoric of Ralph Reed by looking at his use of persuasive narratives. The theoretical basis for this part of my analysis comes from the work of Walter Fisher. In his book, Human Communication as Narration, Fisher describes his theory that all communication can be thought of in terms of story; he calls this the narrative paradigm. Fisher begins by defining narration:

When I use the term "narration," I do not mean a fictive composition whose propositions may be true or false and have no necessary relationship to the message of that composition. By "narration," I mean symbolic actions-- words and/or deeds--that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them (58).

This definition gets away from the idea that narration is a separate subset of human communication. Fisher quotes Kenneth Burke to provide a history of narration: "We assume a time when our primal ancestors became able to go from sensations to words. When they could duplicate the experience of tasting an orange by saying, 'the taste of an orange,' that was when story came into the world" (65). He then explains narrative rationality, a concept that is an integral part of his paradigm: "Traditional rationality is . . . a normative construct. Narrative rationality is, on the other hand, descriptive; it offers an account, an understanding, of any instance of human choice and action" (66). All of these help to redefine narration not as an isolated construction, but rather as a way of thinking (and, as Fisher later explains, a human's natural way of thinking).

Fisher then lays out his paradigm. He states that it has five major presuppositions:

(1) Humans are essentially storytellers. (2) The paradigmatic mode of human decision making and communication is "good reasons," which vary in form among situations, genres, and media of communication. (3) The production and practice of good reasons are ruled by matters of history, biography, culture, and character. . . . (4) Rationality is determined by the nature of persons as narrative beings--their inherent awareness of narrative probability, what constitutes a coherent story, and their constant habit of testing narrative fidelity... (5) The world as we know it is a set of stories that must be chosen among in order for us to live life in a process of continual re-creation. In short, good reasons are the stuff of stories, the means by which humans realize their nature as reasoning-valuing animals (65).

Humans therefore judge on the basis of stories. If a story "rings true" it has narrative fidelity, probability, and is coherent, therefore

believable and persuasive. If, on the other hand, a story does not square with the experience that audience members, it does not constitute sufficiently "good reasons" under narrative rationality and is rejected. This notion of good reasons, according to Karl Wallace (quoted by Fisher), is closely connected to the basic definition of rhetoric: "One could do worse than characterize rhetoric as the art of finding and effectively presenting good reasons" (78). Thus, narration and rhetoric go hand in hand, and narrative fidelity, coherence, and probability become legitimate basis for judging arguments. A powerful and persuasive story is therefore a potent form of rhetoric.

To justify his paradigm, Fisher makes the claim that humans are inherent storytellers and that their natural way of understanding the world is through narratives. He suggests that the human being could be classified as a *Homo narrans*, or a creature whose essential nature depends on narration. He states, "When narration is taken as the master metaphor, it subsumes the others. The other metaphors become conceptions that inform various ways of recounting or accounting for human choice and action" (62). Fisher explains that the narrative impulse often goes unquestioned and unexamined because it is a basic part of socialization:

That narrative, whether written or oral, is a feature of human nature and that it crosses time and culture is attested by White: "Far from being one code among many that a culture may utilize for endowing experience with meaning, narrative is a metacode, a human universal on the basis of which trans-cultural messages about the shared reality can be transmitted . . . the absence of narrative capacity or a refusal of

narrative indicates an absence or refusal of meaning itself" (65).

Our reality, according to Fisher's paradigm, cannot be understood outside the realm of story. When we remember, envision, recount, or predict an event, we think in terms of plot, characters, theme, believability, and setting, among other narrative features. Our lives, therefore, are a series of overlapping, interlocking stories, and our communication with one another reflects that. When we speak to one another we talk about what happened, who did it or was affected by it, where did it happen, when did it happen, and possibly why did it happen. All of these are essentially storytelling elements.

Because narration is such a basic part of human existence, effective narratives are inherently powerful. Fisher states that

The idea of human beings as story-tellers posits the generic form of all symbol composition. It holds that symbols are created and communicated ultimately as stories meant to give order to human experience and to induce others to dwell in them in order to establish ways of living in common, in intellectual and spiritual communities in which there is confirmation for the story that constitutes one's life (63).

Therefore, if a rhetor can present a convincing story, he or she can establish a powerful bond with the audience. Fisher further explains this by stating, "The operative principle of narrative rationality is identification rather than deliberation" (66). It is just as important, if not more so, for a rhetor to identify with his or her audience through stories than it is for him or her to present a clear and well-reasoned argument (which could also be looked at as a type of story). A rhetor who realizes that human understanding and rationality

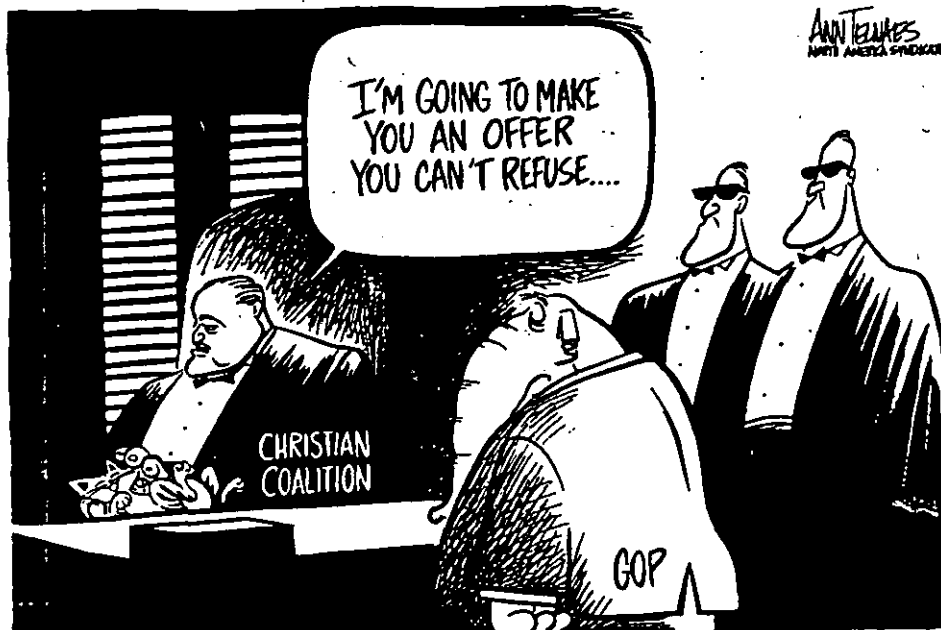
stems from narrative probability, coherence, and fidelity can use that set of criteria to construct a message that will "ring true" and ultimately persuade an audience better than any syllogism. The connection between rhetor and audience is the power behind narration as Fisher explains in the following statement:

Narrative rationality makes these demands only to the degree that it incorporates the aspects of rationality that tradition has focused on. Behind this, however, narrative rationality presupposes the logic of narrative capacities that we all share. It depends on our minds' being as Booth represents them in Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent, a key point of which is: "Not only do human beings successfully infer other beings' states of mind from symbolic clues; we know that they characteristically, in all societies, build each other's minds" (66).

Fisher also states that the narratives that are the most influential and effective in terms of connection between speaker and listener are myths: "The most compelling, persuasive stories are mythic in form, stories reflective of 'public dreams' that give meaning and significance to life" (76). These stories resonate most deeply with the largest number of people because they deal with the collective future and the shared goals of a community. Thus, this type of narrative can very effectively be used for persuasion of a large group of people.

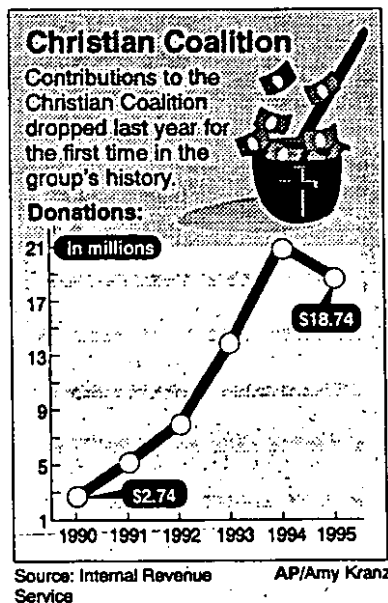
Finally, narratives have natural moral and ethical characteristics. Fisher describes stories as "inevitably moral inducements" (58). He argues that ". . . narratives are moral constructs. As White asserts: 'Where, in any account of reality, narrativity is present, we can be sure that morality or a moral impulse is present too'" (68). Just as one's rhetoric by definition

moves one's audience in a moral direction, one's narratives also invite the listener to move in a moral direction. One cannot describe reality without also implicitly discussing moral issues. The stories that one tells reflect the morals by which one lives.



The Republicans' Big Brother

The Christian Coalition was founded in 1990 by Reverend Pat Robertson after his unsuccessful presidential campaign. Its purpose is to give religious conservatives a voice in the political arena. In the words of Ralph Reed, Executive Director, "The Christian Coalition is a grassroots citizen organization that devotes the vast majority and bulk of its resources to influencing legislation" (Drinkard, 1). The coalition claims to have 1.7 million members and to represent over 40 million religious conservatives across the country. There are more than 900 local chapters of the organization, and donations have increased steadily from \$2.74 million in 1990 to \$21.2 million in 1994.



Drinkard of the Associated Press writes, "While publicly the coalition insists its purpose is issue advocacy and not politics, its top officials make no bones in private about their political involvement and impact" (2). The Christian Coalition is especially important to the Republican Party. The agenda it pushes centers around socially conservative issues, therefore, the candidates that it backs are almost exclusively conservative Republicans. According to the Leadership Institute, a non-partisan educational foundation, "The Christian Coalition members are most concerned about issues such as abortion, pornography, gay rights, education and other 'family' issues" ("Ralph E. Reed Jr." 1).

The coalition's most commonly used strategy is its distribution of voting guides, a voting record of all of the current candidates in an election. The guides indicate whether a given candidate voted with or against the stated positions of the Christian Coalition; these guides have been the target of much of the criticism of the organization. An article in the United Press International stated: "Church of Christ Reverend Jay Litner complained that the guides were 'blatantly'

biased against Democrats and urged churches to shun the guides" ("Churches Criticize" 1). The voter guides were further criticized in a letter from Senate Democratic leaders to Ralph Reed and Pat Robertson: "Missing from recent Christian Coalition voter guides and scorecards are any votes relating to such Christian themes as providing food, shelter, and health care to the poor or disabled" (1). Senator Byron Dorgan stated recently that "We're not quite sure how a vote on the line-item veto or increased spending on the Star Wars weapon systems [items featured in the voter guides] fits into any religious agenda" (1). Dr. William Phillippe, a Presbyterian minister, called the coalition's actions, "arrogance in the name of Christ" (1).

"It has seemed to us that from day one, their purpose has been to elect candidates they want to public office," stated spokesman for Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Joseph Conn (1). Critics of the coalition argue that it has undue influence over the Republican Party. "They own the Republican Party lock, stock and Bible," according to Clinton campaign advisor James Carville. Tony Campolo, a Baptist minister, criticizes the coalition because, instead of being the champions of Christian values, ". . . it champions Republican values. And they are using Christianity to try to suck us into their movement" (Jacoby 3). The Chicago Tribune reports in a recent article on the power of the coalition:

On the local level, the coalition for years has been quietly stacking school boards and city councils with its members. Its breakthrough in national elections came in 1994, when members distributed millions of pro-Republican voter guides that helped the GOP gain control of Congress after forty years in the minority. Its reward was a seat at the

table of power. (2)

Representing one of the largest voting blocks in the nation, (according to The Christian Science Monitor, "White evangelical Protestants, represent twenty-four percent of registered voters, up from nineteen percent in 1987" ("Dole Addresses . . ." 2)) the Christian Coalition has the political power to influence the nomination process, election outcomes, and the issue positions of the candidates. Pat Robertson, the founder and President of the organization, stated bluntly, "The Christian Coalition, without it probably Bob Dole wouldn't be the nominee" (Drinkard 2). Dole himself confirmed the role of the coalition when, during the Republican primaries, he said, "You're going to have a big, big say in what happens in 1996" (Jacoby 1).

An example of the pressure that the Christian Coalition can bring to bear was the recent battle over abortion just before the Republican National Convention. The People for the American Way Action Fund reports that "In a Sunday meeting with GOP delegates aligned with the Religious Right, Christian Coalition Executive Director Ralph Reed gloated about the group's success in defeating the Dole campaign's efforts to insert 'tolerance' language in the GOP's anti-abortion plank" ("Ralph Reed to . . ." 1). Reed spoke of the pre-convention battles: "We succeeded in getting Henry Hyde chosen as platform committee chairman. The Dole campaign mistakenly thought that he would participate in watering the plank down. They didn't discover how mistaken they were until they got here" (1).

Reed also spoke about the debate over who would chair the committee overseeing the abortion plank:

Secondly, we were lobbying for Kay James to be chairwoman of the individual rights subcommittee with oversight over the pro-life plank. We had gotten a signoff from very higher ups that they liked Kay . . . After we recommended her, they then came back and said, "We don't know if we can trust Kay to be chairwoman of the subcommittee because she works for Pat Robertson and she might take orders from him instead of Bob Dole." So instead they put someone else in as chairwoman, but in the end we got our revenge. Kay was on the subcommittee and she turned out to be one of the leaders on the platform committee (2).

"The Christian Coalition came to San Diego looking to show Bob Dole who's boss, and they did," stated Michael Hudson, Vice President of the People for the American Way (2).

Another, more recent example of the control that the coalition has over the Republican Party occurred during the Road to Victory '96 conference. The New York Times reports that Republican Presidential candidate Bob Dole "...had turned down an invitation to speak at the conference but decided to appear after he came under a barrage of criticism from Christian Coalition followers and after a personal appeal from the group's leader, Ralph Reed" (Clines 3). The Christian Science Monitor states that coalition members had begun to grow discontented with Dole and ". . . his lack of campaign emphasis on moral issues, particularly abortion" ("Dole Addresses . . ." 1).

James Guth, a professor at Furman University and a specialist on religious conservatives, states: "The tensions within the religious

right have always been there, but they are less well-concealed. Some in the movement have lost patience with the Republican Party" (1). The Christian Coalition has made it clear to the party over the past few months that the upcoming elections cannot be won without the support of religious conservatives; therefore, Republicans running for office need to mold their agendas to the liking of Pat Robertson and Ralph Reed. Speaking directly to the members of the GOP, Ralph Reed made this point clear: "If you want to retain control of the House and Senate, and you want to have any chance at all of gaining the White House, you had better not retreat from the pro-life and pro-family that made you a majority party in the first place" (Reed "Road" 4).

These demands are not made idly. According to The Chicago Tribune, "Reed said the coalition will register a million new voters before November" (Jacoby 2). Later in the same article it is reported that the Christian Coalition, ". . . wields enormous influence in key states such as Iowa, Texas, and South Carolina, which it helped win for Dole as he moved to clinch his nomination" (2). According to The Washington Post, Reed stated that the coalition plans to ". . . distribute 45 million voter guides, contact 2 million to 3 million households by mail or phone and give out 17 million congressional scorecards before the November 5th election" (Edsall 1). Reed seemed to be issuing a final warning to both Democrats and Republicans when he stated at the Road to Victory '96 conference: "If you think we turned out a large vote in 1994, you ain't seen nothing yet" (Reed "Road" 3).

A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

The focus of this analysis is Dr. Ralph E. Reed, Jr., the coalition's most visible spokesman outside of Pat Robertson. Reed's background is mainly political, not religious. Before Reed joined the coalition, he held the office of Executive Director of the College Republican National Committee. He also founded a conservative political organization called Students for America. According to the Leadership Institute, "At SFA, he built a network of 10,000 conservative college students on 200 campuses in 41 states" (1).

Reed is also considered one of the more moderate voices in the movement. His rhetoric is not as fiery as Robertson's, his statements are not as bold, and his political philosophy appears to be much more tolerant. "We have all been guilty of excessive hyperbole in fundraising letters, but I would hope both sides will resist attacking individuals and stick to policy differences," Reed states in his book, Active Faith ("Ralph Reed vs. . . ." 2). He often quotes the words of Martin Luther King Jr. in his speeches: "We must forsake violence of the fist, tongue, or heart" (Reed "Faith 3). Later in his book, he again denounces the extreme rhetoric that is often used by his own organization:

We will be judged by history and by our God not according to the political victories we achieve but by whether our words and our deeds reflect His love. When one of the nation's leading evangelical preachers suggests that the President may be a murderer, when a pro-life leader says that to vote for Clinton is to sin against God, and when conservative talk-show hosts lampoon the sexual behavior of the leader of the

free world, their speech reflects poorly on the gospel and on our faith ("Ralph Reed vs. . . ." 5).

There are many other examples of this throughout Reed's public discourse. According to a publication from People for the American Way, Reed's rhetoric is ". . . a study in how to describe an extreme agenda in mild tones" (1).

In this analysis, I will examine the rhetorical narratives of Dr. Reed in three of his speeches: his address to the Christian Coalition in 1995, his address to the National Press Club, and his address to the Road to Victory '96 Conference. I will look at three of the eight elements of Sonja Foss's model for narrative criticism: characters, narrator, and audience; from this I will draw ethical conclusions. Do Reed's narratives move his audience to do good or to do evil? I will argue that he describes his characters, positions himself in relation to his audience, and fashions his rhetoric to appeal to a specific ideal audience in such a way that subtly, subversively moves his audience to do exactly what he condemns so explicitly.

Violence of the Tongue

For the analysis of Reed's narrative, I will use the method of rhetorical criticism proposed by Sonja Foss in her book, Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice. She states that there are eight possible elements of a narrative that a critic can examine: setting (where and when the story takes place), characters (who performs the actions in the narrative and how are they described), narrator (from whose perspective is the story told and how does that person

relate to the audience), events (what happens, what is the plot of the story), temporal relations (how does time work in the story and does the narrator use it for rhetorical effect), causal relations (how does the plot develop, who causes the events to take place), audience (what kind of person would be most likely to respond to this narrative), and theme (what is the underlying message of the story) (404). Foss then suggests that the critic select the features of the narrative that are the most rhetorically interesting (she advises against using all eight) (405). The final task of the critic is to determine what effects this narrative will have on an audience according to the analysis of the selected elements (406).

I will begin by summarizing the narrative that Reed uses to persuade his audience. These speeches are from three different years (1994, 1995, and 1996), but the same basic story is told in each. In this story (which closely resembles a classic fairy tale), politics is a battle between good and evil forces. America is now in the control of liberals (the evil forces) and, as a result, it is suffering greatly. Once, America was beautiful, strong, and moral, but now it is in danger of collapsing. Conservative Republicans are the righteous political knights who can save America; however, they are not strong enough to challenge the forces of evil by themselves. They need the support and guidance of the Christian Coalition to help them restore America to its former greatness. The focus of the story may shift slightly from speech to speech (in 1994 Reed was celebrating a victory that the coalition had won for the Republicans; in 1995 he was preparing his troops for the next battle; and in 1996 he was

trying to inspire his disheartened followers), but the basic plotline remains the same.

The first component of this story that I will examine is characters, and of the two major groups (good and evil forces) I will look at the evil forces first. Who are the villains of Reed's narrative? The enemies that he names specifically are Bob Casey, Tom Foley, George Mitchell, Howard Metzenbaum, Harris Wofford, Anne Richards, Mario Cuomo, Connie Chung (Reed "Role" 1), Jocelyn Elders (2), Nadine Strassen, Henry Foster (3), Howard Stern, Roseanne Barr, Hillary Clinton (Reed "Faith" 2), Al Gore, Theodore McKee, Dick Morris (Reed "Road" 1), and, of course, Bill Clinton (2). Reed also characterizes several groups as villainous: The Washington Post, the Democrats, The Anti-Defamation League, the Department of Education, Planned Parenthood (Reed "Role" 2), the American Civil Liberties Union, the media, the AFL-CIO, feminists (3), the NEA, the FEC, and liberals in general (Reed "Road" 3).

A credible story must have characters that are fleshed out. Reed describes the actions of those that he has labeled as the villains of his narrative in order to give them dimension, to make them more real (and as a consequence more evil). In his speech to the Christian Coalition, he begins warming up the crowd with this description of enemy actions: "Think back one year ago to the taunts and insults that you and we endured from those who sought to silence people of faith, and to drive us from the public square. The Washington Post called people like you, and this is a quote 'poor, uneducated and easy to command'" (Reed "Role" 1). Later in the same speech, he states,

"And then, there was Jocelyn Elders. She called church-going Evangelicals 'very religious, non-Christians'" (2). Reed continues the persecution theme as he describes a Congressional race in South Carolina: "They had names for candidates who were guilty of the unpardonable crime of going to church or synagogue, reading the Bible, and praying daily. They had names for people who dared to bring their faith into the public square, and their issues of conscience into the political process. They called them 'extremists, radical, right-wing, Christian Coalition-types'" (2). Reed tells of a high-school student in southern Illinois who was ". . . escorted into a police paddy wagon, hand-cuffed and threatened with mace, because she tried to lead a prayer around the school's flag pole before school hours" (3) and of a seven-year-old Texas boy whose valentine to God could not be put up on the bulletin board with his classmates' valentines because the teacher thought it violated the separation of Church and State (3). In his address to the National Press Club, Reed continues to describe the actions of his enemies: "In Massachusetts, a United States Senator attacked his opponent not because of his voting record, not because of where he stood on the issues, but because he was once an elder in his church" (Reed "Faith" 2), and "In South Carolina, a candidate for attorney general attacked a gubernatorial candidate who happened to be an evangelical Christian by saying that 'his only qualifications for office are that he speaks fluently in tongues and handles snakes'" (2). In all of these descriptions (and there are many others), the enemies of the Christian Coalition are characterized as being in positions of power (they are in charge of

the government, the media, the education system, and law enforcement) and as using that power to oppress or attack people of faith. All of these mini-narratives are used to demonstrate how the villains are pushing the forces of good down and keeping them from restoring America's greatness.

Reed describes his enemies as immoral: "Is that the kind of moral leadership that we need in America?" (Reed "Road" 3), as fiscally irresponsible: ". . . he [Clinton] gave us the largest tax increase in American history," (2), and as deceptive: "Do you think the media is going to tell the American people about that record?" (3). They are anti-Christian: ". . . even as the American people are yearning for a return to their spiritual roots, a strange hostility and scowling intolerance greets those who bring their religious beliefs into the public square" (Reed "Faith" 2). According to Reed, his enemies argue that ". . . the greatest threat to our democracy is if people who believe in God and moral values get involved in politics" (2). Reed's opponents are hypocritical: "This administration gutted the drug-czar's office, and then on the threshold of an election, discovers the dangers of tobacco" (Reed "Road" 3). Most importantly, Reed claims that, under America's current leadership, an imposing threat has emerged: "It is a threat of our national character. It is divorce, abortion on demand, illiteracy, out-of-wedlock births, crime, drugs, family break-up, violence; it is the lives that it consumes, the hopelessness that it breeds, the dreams that it destroys" (Reed "Role" 2).

Now, who are the heroes of this narrative? Again, here are the heroes that Reed specifically names: Newt Gingrich, Bob Dole, Mike DeWine, Rick Santorum, Rush Limbaugh (1), David Beasley (2), Pope John Paul II (Reed "Road" 2), Margaret Thatcher (4), Ronald Reagan, Martin Luther King Jr. (Reed "Faith" 1), Jesus Christ, Dan Quayle, William Bennett, and Jim Sasser (2). Reed also identifies the following groups as heroic: Jews (Reed "Role" 2), Roman Catholics, Protestants (1), the pro-life movement (1), and the members of the Christian Coalition (Reed "Faith" 1). In contrast to his list of villains, who were mostly liberal Democrats, Reed's list of heroes is almost exclusively made up of conservative Republicans (there are a couple of notable exceptions).

As with the villains, Reed fleshes out his heroes by describing what they have done:

If you want to understand our movement you must not simply cover our political activity or our political organizations. You must see these people doing the things they always have done, unheralded and unproclaimed. Working in homes for unwed mothers, in crisis centers, in prisons and in jails. Teaching the illiterate how to read in homeless shelters and in inner city schools. In hospitals, caring for the hurting and binding up the wounds of the broken hearted. That is the work of faith (3).

Ironically, this is Reed's only mention of heroic action outside of politics. Throughout these speeches, he continually does what he proclaims that one must not do if one wants to truly understand his organization: focus solely on their political accomplishments. In 1994 before the congressional elections, he states, "That is why the Christian Coalition has undertaken the largest nonpartisan voter

education and get-out-the-vote effort in its history. In the next several weeks we will distribute 33 million nonpartisan voter guides that detail where every candidate stands on a broad range of issues" (1). In 1995 after the elections, he states, "We distributed 17 million Congressional Scorecards detailing where every member of Congress voted on key issues affecting the family. We distributed 43 million nonpartisan voter guides, and the result was the largest turn-out of religious conservative voters in American history-and a landslide!" (Reed "Role" 1). In 1996 before the presidential election, he states that his organization is about to "launch the most ambitious voter education and get-out-the-vote program in the history of American politics" (Reed "Road" 3). However, the voter guides are not the only way in which the heroes of this narrative influence politics: ". . . because of the efforts of the people in this room, and millions like you, today Jocelyn Elders is the former Surgeon General of the United States, and that's what she should have been all along!" (Reed "Role" 2). Reed describes his heroes as if they were not simply influencing politicians but as if they were the politicians. "That is why we presented the Contract with the American Family, which is already moving rapidly through Congress . . ." and later, "We want to abolish the Federal Department of Education . . ." and, "We want a federal ban on the partial-birth abortion . . ." and, "We want a Religious Equality Amendment . . ." (2). Reed portrays his heroes as continually taking part in historic action. As a direct result of that action elections are won, Surgeon Generals are dismissed, legislation is moved through Congress, federal departments are eliminated, and

the Constitution is amended. Reed takes every opportunity to remind his followers how much power (and as a consequence, how much responsibility) they have.

If we balance the budget tomorrow, eliminate the deficit, and reform Medicare, but if we lose our children, if we lose our culture, if we lose our nation, then we will have failed ourselves, and failed our God, and my friends, we cannot fail! (2).

It is clearly up to the heroes to restore America to greatness. No one else has the strength or the opportunity to do so; therefore, the Christian Coalition not only can but must do everything in its power to defeat the enemy.

Naturally, the heroes of Reed's narrative have the opposite characteristics of the villains. The heroes are righteous automatically because of their connection to Jesus, and Reed stresses this connection in his description of his followers. "Let us never forget that we do not bear the name of Ronald Reagan, or Bob Dole, or Newt Gingrich; we bear the name which is above every name" (4). "And the burden is to remember whom we serve, and whose spirit animates us," Reed states (4). He continues this theme by saying, "His life must be our model," and ". . . we are measured by enduring truths and by the everlasting love and overarching sovereignty of Almighty God. That's how we measure ourselves," and ". . . when he does come back, I pray with all I am and all I ever hope to be . . . that he will say. . . 'Well done, good and faithful servant'" (Reed "Road" 4). The forces of good are honest in comparison with the villains: "The Christian Coalition is going to tell the American people

the facts about that [Clinton's] record" (3). They are ". . . decent, honorable, hard-working men and women who I believe are the backbone and social fabric of this great nation" (Reed "Faith" 1). Reed summarizes nicely the character and duty of his heroes in this section of his speech to the Road to Victory '96 Conference:

Now we serve a mighty and merciful God. We live in a great and glorious nation. We are heirs to the heritage of a brave and decent people. And I believe that injustice cannot prevail forever, that right will, in the end, and must win over wrong, and that, in Lady Thatcher's words, that good must triumph over evil. And after all, why shouldn't we believe that? Because we serve a risen Lord. The grave is empty. He is alive and he's coming back again very, very soon. Amen (Reed "Road" 4).

Now I will look at how Reed, as narrator, positions himself in relation to his audience. In many instances throughout the speeches, Reed links himself to the audience by using the pronouns we, us, and our. He does this especially when he is describing heroic action. The following is a typical example of this connection:

We gather here this weekend, one year later, grateful, humbled, and honored to have played a part in such an historic seat change. We have gained what w e have always sought, a place at the table, a sense of legitimacy. We are an authentic voice of faith in the conversation that w e call democracy. But o u r work, my friends is not done. We have much to do (Reed "Role" 2).

In this way, Reed also becomes a hero of the narrative. He uses this connection to position himself as both a character in and the teller of the story. However, there are times in which Reed chooses to distance himself from his audience by using the pronouns "you" and

"yours" in the speeches to the Christian Coalition and the pronouns "they," "them," and "their" in the speech to the National Press Club. In fact, Reed tries to align himself with the members of the press club rather than with his own followers in this statement: "So it behooves us not to stereotype them, marginalize them, or attempt to demonize their leaders. It is our responsibility to understand them, what causes them to get involved with politics, and what kind of America they believe in" (Reed "Faith" 1). The pronouns "our" and "us" are, in this instance, used to connect Reed to his audience, the members of the press, instead of to the heroes of the narrative. Reed does this again later in the speech when he argues that the Christian Coalition ". . . deserves a voice in our government" (1). Reed continues to speak of his own followers as outsiders by saying, ". . . they are not 'poor, uneducated, and easy to command.' Sixty-six percent of them either have attended or have graduated from college," and "They are well-educated, middle-class baby boomers whose primary concern is the safety, protection and education of their children" (1). This is not simply audience adaptation, for in the next paragraph, Reed switches to we and our when describing heroic actions by the Christian Coalition members: ". . . we will continue to advance the issues in which we believe, always endeavoring to do so with grace, with dignity, and with respect for our opponents. But we will not measure our success on the outcome of these races" (1). Even in speeches to his own followers, Reed tries to separate himself subtly from them. In his speech to the Christian Coalition in 1995, after a paragraph of explaining how "we" changed the outcome of the

election, he begins to separate himself from his audience by saying, "Think back just one year ago to the taunts and insults that you and we endured" (Reed "Role" 1). If Reed had just wanted to talk about himself and his audience, a simple we would have sufficed. He follows this with a further attempt at differentiation: "The Washington Post called people like you, and this is a quote 'poor, uneducated, and easy to command'" (1). Again, Reed could have included himself in the group that was being insulted. He readily includes himself in any description of heroic deeds that his followers have been a part of, and yet he does not appear to truly identify with them.

There are admittedly many interpretations of Reed's use of pronouns. It is possible that Reed wants to separate himself from the rest of the Christian Coalition because he is their leader and therefore subject to different circumstances than his followers. It is possible that he differentiates for rhetorical effect: in the Washington Post example he could be saying, "this is what they have done to you" and to include himself would take away some of the argumentative sting. It is also possible that Reed is showing a form of contempt for his organization's members and that he does not want to be included among them. Regardless of the interpretation, the fact remains that at certain times and to certain audiences he chooses to separate or draw a distinction between himself and the members of the Christian Coalition.

In support of the claim that Reed shows contempt for his followers, he seems to insult them indirectly in his speech to the

National Press Club. At the beginning of this speech, Reed tries to reintroduce the Christian Coalition to the members of the National Press Club. After a section of statistics and demographic characteristics about the coalition's members, Reed explains the enormous influx of people into his organization in recent years by saying:

Winston Churchill once said, "The American people always do the right thing after they have exhausted every other possibility." After the sexual revolution of the sixties, the cultural narcissism of the seventies, and the self-indulgent acquisitiveness of the eighties, Americans are turning inward and upward to fill what Pascal called the God-shaped vacuum that is every person's soul (Reed "Faith" 2).

To fill this vacuum, these Americans have begun to support or join or at least become more receptive to the Christian Coalition. It is the people from this narcissistic, self-indulgent, acquisitive population that have given the coalition its newfound political strength. These people do not match Reed's earlier description of the heroes of the narrative. Now, Reed is now saying that his followers are people who were sexually immoral in the sixties, spiritually empty in the seventies, selfish and greedy in the eighties, and have now "found God." They have turned to the Christian Coalition after ". . . exhausting every other possibility." This implication would seem to contradict Reed's earlier characterization of his followers as righteous people who have been called to perform a mission for God.

Reed positions himself above his audience (members of the Christian Coalition) through his speaking style. This is evident by comparing how Reed speaks to the National Press Club (an outside

audience) and the Christian Coalition (an inside audience). He emphasizes his superiority in intellect and vocabulary by filling his speeches to the Christian Coalition with complex syntax and subordinate clauses. These sentences are much more wordy, complex, and convoluted than those in his speech to the press club. In The Ethics of Rhetoric, Richard Weavers states ". . . in present-day writing that sentence [an average sentence] will run 20-30 words, to cite an average range for serious writing" (144). In his speech to the Road to Victory '96 Conference, Reed averaged 22.265 words per sentence; in the speech to the Christian Coalition in 1995, he averaged 21.273 words per sentence; in his speech to the National Press Club, however, Reed's average sentence was 17.363 words long (the validity of the mean differences between speeches were confirmed by a z-test). In the speech to the press club, Reed uses only two sentences which are fifty words or longer. By comparison, he uses five sentences of fifty or more words in his speech to the Christian Coalition and six of these sentences in the speech to the conference in 1996 (the longest of which is eighty-nine words). So, in his speeches to the coalition, Reed is speaking within the range for "serious writing," and in the speech to the National Press Club, his speech falls below that range (a more usual conversational style). Through this speaking style, Reed is positioning the members of the Christian Coalition in a one-down position in relation to him and the members of the National Press Club in a more equal position.

The third part of my analysis focuses on the ideal audience for Reed's narrative. One of the most important elements of Reed's ideal

audience is fear. This audience would be fearful of the villains that Reed describes throughout the narrative both because of the evilness of the villain and because the villain is now in power. He uses mini-narratives about the persecution of Christians to help build this fear. The high-school student in Metropolis, Illinois who was maced and arrested for conducting a prayer around a flag pole, the little boy who could not put up his Valentine to God because it violated the separation of church and state, and the references to candidates who were attacked solely because of their religious beliefs are examples of how Reed tries to convince his ideal audience that the forces of evil are out to get Christians. Included in the descriptions of many enemies are attacks that they have made on the Christian Coalition; Jocelyn Elders and The Washington Post are examples of this. Reed also warns his ideal audience repeatedly to be prepared for upcoming attacks: "As we go into 1996, you prepare yourselves for the same kinds of insults, and the same kinds of taunts that we had to go through in 1994" (Reed "Role" 5).

However, the fear that Reed generates is not just directed at the enemies of the Christian Coalition. Reed invites his ideal audience to be fearful of the world in general. He does this by concentrating most of his speech time to describing the problems that exist in modern America. This focus creates fear for the future of the country: ". . . for thirty years the government has waged war on social pathologies, and the social pathologies are winning" (Reed "Faith" 4). Some of the things that the ideal audience needs to be afraid of, according to Reed, are illegitimate children, single mothers,

divorce, abortion, illiteracy, inner-city violence, starvation (4), illegal drugs, tobacco (Reed "Road" 2), homosexuals, and taxes (3). Reed stresses that each of these things is going on every day in America, making their accumulated impact seem insurmountable. The thing that makes these things all the more frightening to Reed's ideal audience is that he has already told them that they are responsible for solving all of these problems, for restoring America to greatness, but he makes the problems appear unsolvable. This leaves the audience with the overwhelming frustration of being assigned to complete an impossible task.

There is one outlet that Reed provides for this frustration: hatred of the enemy. He invites the audience to lump the fear of the enemy with the fear of society's problems as if they were inextricably connected. He even suggests that the villains of the narrative are at least partially to blame for the problems that America faces as a nation. Because Reed has made solving the problems seem impossible, he has taken away any hope for the audience to alleviate their fear, but if the fear of the problems becomes the same as the fear of the enemy, he does leave one option open to his audience to rid themselves of it. He suggests that if the audience can eliminate the enemy, they can also eliminate the fear.

Reed invites hatred of his enemies through his use of ridicule and sarcasm. In 1995, Reed seems to take a great deal of satisfaction from the defeat of the Democrats. He reads a list of vanquished foes and then indicates a hero who replaced each of them. This section of his speech is concluded with a mocking statement about the former

governor of Texas: "Anne Richards is doing Doritos commercials"
(Reed "Role" 1). He then ridicules the former governor of New York:

And Mario Cuomo, well, he's begun a second career, as host of his own radio talk show. Well, Mario, let me, on behalf of all the delegates here, and millions of Americans all across this great country, say this: I know Rush Limbaugh, Rush Limbaugh is a friend of mine, and you, sir, are no Rush Limbaugh! (1).

Reed follows this by playfully mocking another enemy in his narrative: the mass media. "Now, these political swaps that I've talked about are like CBS News deciding to replace Connie Chung with Newt Gingrich's mother. Keep praying! We have faith" (1). Reed seems to be clearly conditioning his audience to disrespect and, ultimately, to hate their enemies with this exchange:

Reed: And finally, and thirdly--and this is the most important difference--neither my speech nor any other speech that you will hear this weekend was written or proofread by Dick Morris or a call girl.

You like that?

Audience: Yeah! (Reed "Road" 1).

Reed ridicules a stated enemy and then invites the audience to voice their approval of the attack. In this way, he is not only gaining acceptance from the audience on the content of the ridicule, but also on the method itself. With their response, the audience is affirming that they do not just tolerate attacks of this sort, they like them.

In summary, Reed's ideal audience is made up of people who are fearful. They fear their enemies and are especially anxious about the current balance of power in America. They are frightened of the

constant threat of persecution by the forces of evil. They realize that they have the awesome responsibility of righting the wrongs of society, but they find this task nearly impossible. The frustration that comes from this is therefore displaced onto the villains of the narrative. The ideal audience then turns their attention to destroying their enemies in the hopes that this will lessen the fear and the frustration that they feel.

". . . Our Words and Our Deeds Reflect His Love"

Reed is a skillful rhetor and his message is powerfully persuasive for several reasons. One, he puts his arguments into a carefully constructed narrative frame. This makes his rhetoric especially potent because, if his audience finds the story to have narrative fidelity, probability, and coherence (which they are likely to do) it will mean more to them than a simply logic-based argument, because, according to the narrative paradigm, it will match their natural way of thinking more closely. Two, Reed's narrative is mythic, which Fisher states is the most compelling kind of story. He transforms the ordinary political battles that his group faces into a war between good and evil. Mythic storytelling makes battles seem more significant, makes the actions of his organization seem more heroic, and makes his enemies seem more demonic. And three, Reed effectively uses the inherent moral characteristics of narrative to make his arguments more persuasive. He can avoid the often dangerous argumentative task of stating that a person or group is immoral by simply telling a narrative in which this person or group

is committing what his audience would consider to be immoral acts. These three things have made Reed's story the defining story of the Christian Coalition.

Now, the question is this: does Reed's rhetoric move his followers toward what is good or toward what is evil? In this final section, I will draw some ethical conclusions about Reed's use of persuasive narratives in the three speeches that I have analyzed. In order to do this I will focus on three ethical questions based on the writings of Richard Weaver. First, how does Reed invite his followers to view the opposition? Second, what emotions are Reed's followers asked to feel (What emotions does Reed play on?)? And, third, does Reed show contempt for his followers?

Not once in the three speeches that I analyzed does Ralph Reed explicitly ask his audience to hate Bill Clinton, or the media, or liberals. Not once does he state that the villains of his narrative are evil. However, Reed subtly creates a climate in which it is acceptable, even desirable, to hate one's enemies and to think of them as evil. In each speech, Reed has a list of people whom he characterizes as an enemy or opponent of his organization. Also, in each speech, Reed has a lengthy section devoted to the evils of contemporary America. These evils, he states, are the things that the members of the Christian Coalition must fight against. This is one of the things that Weaver identifies as a component of base rhetoric: introducing consequence without explaining the cause. Because of this missing argumentative component, the audience is invited to think that the stated enemies are the cause for the contemporary

evils; thus, the coalition members are invited to fight against and hate their opponents just as hard as they fight against and hate evil. Reed never directly makes this causal connection, but he does leave enough logical space for an audience to make the connection for themselves. It would not be a big leap for an audience member to reach this conclusion from the partial argument that Reed provides. One possible logical construction that an audience member might make is this:

1. The objective of the Christian Coalition is to struggle against the evil that is currently present in America (a premise provided by Reed).
2. In his speech, Dr. Reed has identified some people who are opponents of ours; they are keeping us from reaching our objective (also provided by Reed),
3. Therefore, these people are on the side of/one of the causes of/ giving passive consent to the evils of America.

Reed never states this conclusion nor does he openly ask his audience to draw this conclusion, but his rhetorical style quietly steers them in that direction.

Richard Weaver states, ". . . parties bethink themselves of how their chieftains speak" (114). Based on this, it is possible to assess a chieftain's rhetoric by looking at his or her followers. Therefore, in considering whether Reed's rhetoric encourages hatred of opposition, the statements of the Christian Coalition members about their enemies would give at least a partial indication of the message that they are receiving from their leader. According to The New York Times, a member of the Christian Coalition stated that Bill Clinton's inauguration was ". . . a repudiation of our founding fathers' covenant

with God" ("Ralph Reed vs. . . ." 4). In 1994, a coalition member stated that ". . . a small minority of godless liberals are working hard to take away our rights" (3). A Missouri newsletter from the Christian Coalition warns

The forty-year reign of a liberal Congress allowed every wind of humanistic doctrine to occupy the high places of authority and seats of influence in this country. Liberal dogma seeped through our culture via legislation, the media and the press, our churches and schools, the courts and our entertainment industry. Like possessed apostles, they have turned the American dream into an American nightmare. They protect the profane while profaning our God (3).

The state director of the California Christian Coalition, Sara DiVito Hardman, recently issued this call to arms:

As government liberalism tries to tighten its immoral hold on America's families, the time has never been better for the forces of God to stand up for our religious and other freedoms. Just watch . . . as the anti-God forces incrementally try to eliminate all traces of God from schools and other public arenas . . . they will also try to rid our country of Churches through taxation laws. WE CAN PUT THEM TO FLIGHT! (4).

It is clear that these quotations came from people who hate the enemies of whom they speak. They seem to be convinced that their opponents have evil intentions. Now, I cannot directly link these statements to the rhetoric of Ralph Reed. There is no way to prove empirically that Reed caused these people to feel the way they do. But, it is not simply a coincidence that Reed's narrative and these statements both come from the same organization. Nor is it mere chance that the people characterized as being evil by the members of the Christian Coalition are exactly the same people that are portrayed

as the villains in Reed's narrative. The story that Reed tells creates a climate in which these kinds of statements can be made. At best, his rhetoric does not discourage his audience from hating liberals, and at worst, it subversively invites them to hate liberals.

"Nowhere does a man's rhetoric catch up with him more completely than in the topics he chooses to win other men's assent," states Richard Weaver (114). Which topics, specifically which emotions, does Reed choose to win his followers assent? How does his narrative invite them to feel? This question ties in directly with one of Weaver's descriptions of unethical rhetoric. This kind of rhetoric exploits its audience by appealing to their base emotions. Reed's narrative does this in several ways.

First, he relies heavily on ridicule and sarcasm in his speeches (at least those to his followers). The first quarter of his speech to the Christian Coalition in 1995 is devoted to ridiculing the coalition's enemies. In this section, Reed not only celebrates his allies' victories, but he also takes equal, if not greater, pleasure in his opponents' defeats. He enjoys and invites the audience to enjoy making fun of these people for losing their jobs. In his speech to the Road to Victory '96 Conference, he ridicules Dick Morris (and, by association, Bill Clinton) and then asks his audience if they liked it. This exchange, again, clearly demonstrates that he wants his audience to approve of and to enjoy the ridicule along with him. This style of speaking is notably absent from Reed's speech to the National Press Club. This indicates that he is consciously using sarcasm and ridicule

for rhetorical effect but only to those that he feels are likely to respond positively to it.

Second, Reed pushes his followers to feel frustration. He asks them to ". . . restore America to greatness" (Reed "Role" 5) but gives them no indication of how to do it. He proposes no plans for renewal, and he gives no hints that any such plans are forthcoming. In Weavers terms, he mentions agents (the coalition members) without also mentioning agency (the means by which they can solve the problems). Further, he makes it a point in each speech to describe in detail the worst problems facing America; each description includes a section telling how difficult, complex, and vast these problems are. These problems are not going to go away by themselves, either, according to Reed. In effect, Reed's instructions to his followers are: "We are in deep trouble and you need to do something, fast." There is no available outlet for the pressure that he creates with vague instructions of this kind; it therefore becomes a constant source of frustration for his audience.

Third, and most importantly, Reed plays on the fear of his audience. The sections of his speeches concerning the problems in America are meant to motivate the audience into action through fear. The members of the Christian Coalition are people who love American fiercely. The thought of it falling into ruin would be a very frightening idea for them and thus a very effective appeal for Reed. He also makes his audience fearful of their enemies. In his speeches to the Christian Coalition, persecution of his organization by outside forces is a major theme. He tells stories of the police, the

government, the public schools, and the media working to oppress Christians. This is a message that has not been lost on his followers. One can clearly see the paranoia in the statements of the Christian Coalition members that I have cited. Again, they mirror the appeals used by Reed: liberals in "the media, . . . our schools, . . . the courts, and our entertainment industry," are "working hard to take away our rights"; "they have turned the American dream into the American nightmare."

The exploitation of these emotions does not move Reed's audience to see a "better version of themselves" (Weaver 25). It does not urge his audience to "partake in something greater and finer" (Weaver 18). It does not lead them toward any ultimate good. It does not show his audience a more perfect version of humankind but instead focuses on its shortcomings. Reed's emotional appeals invite his audience to become any or all of the following: caustic, cynical, bitter, frustrated, angry, and paranoid. These are not the outcomes of rhetoric that moves its audience toward what is good. Reed's narrative is most effective when his audience displays the some of the most base human traits.

The final question that I will look at is: does Reed show contempt for his own followers? Richard Weaver suggests that the way a person argues can be more telling than the actual words that person uses: ". . . we suggest here that a man's method of argument is a truer index of his beliefs than his explicit profession of principles" (58). Reed professes love of his followers, but does his method of argument indicate that love? Reed strategically separates

himself from his followers throughout all three of the speeches. There can be multiple interpretations of this, but there is one underlying message in all of the possible interpretations: "I am not one of you." Reed emphasizes this separation through his speaking style. He uses a much more complex speaking style with his own followers, thus positioning himself above them. Contrast this with the much more straight-forward and conversational speaking style that he uses with the members of the National Press Club. Reed further asks his audience to feel unpleasant emotions: fear, anger, and frustration. He gives them reason to distrust the world around them, to constantly look over their shoulders for oppressive government forces. He implicitly invites them to hate their enemies.

None of these things, by themselves, would provide enough evidence to make the case that Reed shows contempt for his followers, but taken together, all of these things indicate a pattern that contradicts Reed's professions of love and loyalty. He exploits their love of America by telling them that if they do not do something, America will cease to be the great country that they so strongly believe it is. He asks them not to move toward more perfect versions of themselves but instead, persuades them to succumb to the base elements of their nature. He plays on their fear to persuade them to hate and work to destroy his enemies. These are not the actions of a rhetor who loves his audience, wants to elevate them, or wants to move them toward an ideal. These are the actions of a rhetor who, as Weaver describes, "is not motivated by benevolence toward the beloved [the audience], but by selfish appetite" (10).

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